

ORNAMENTAL USES OF BRICK AND CLAY IN BUILDING.

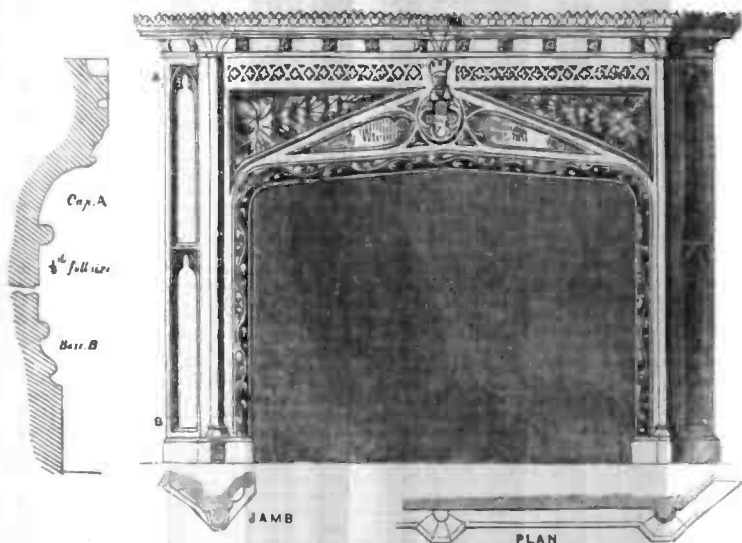
EVEN in modern Rome very great use has been made of brick. Of the famous Farnese palace, begun by Bramante and finished by Michael Angelo, the plain surfaces are of brick, so fine in its texture, and so neat in its joints, that by the superficial observer it is generally taken for stone. The balustrades, the entablatures, and other raised parts, were hewn from the ruins of the Coliseum. In the plains of Lombardy, where stone is rare, clay has, in buildings of importance, been moulded into forms so exquisite, as to have been raised into a material of value and dignity. In the ancient churches of Pavia, it presents itself in all the delicate tracery of the middle ages; in the great hospital, Campo Santo and Castiglione palace, at Milan, it exhibits the arabesque, medallions, and scroll-work of the cinquecento style. On this side of the Alps, clay has never received forms so elaborate; still, in the south of France, particularly at Toulouse, remarkable instances exist. Along the Rhone carved tiles are formed into very elegant cornices and balustrades. Even in England brick was, in days long gone by, moulded into various fanciful forms, denoting similar conceptions of its uses. But whether in consequence of the duty imposed, and the consequent very impolitic limitation of the size and shape, the legal English brick has become the least durable, and most unsightly, used in any country. This produces dislike to it as a material in buildings of importance, not from any intrinsic ugliness, for it is equally fit for all the elegancies of ornamental structure, but from long continued association of the imagination with ideas of coarseness and meanness of construction.



NEW ROYAL EXCHANGE.

THE two engravings of the Thames Tunnel, that of the Nelson Column, and this of the Royal Exchange, have been selected for subjects of appropriate illustration and to subserve the end of bringing forth again to the notice of our readers at this farther and improved stage of progression, Mr. Palmer's process of Glyptographic Drawing. We are not without a feeling of self-gratulation in this respect, for it will be recollected, that in No. 3 of THE BUILDER, we predicted improvement and early excellence. We saw in the process germs of perfectibility, and hesitated not to indorse the note of credit in its favour. Of the building under notice we may say, that the more noticeable parts are now be-

ginning to rear their heads. Great credit is undoubtedly due to Mr. Jackson, the contractor, for the spirited carrying forward of his works. We hear the citizens crying out in amazement at the rapid progress of the elevated and commanding towers or turrets at the east end. More than as passers-by it is not well in our power to say; there is an unaccountable prudery, we may be bold enough to call it a manliness, about some of our reputed men of eminence, that badly squares with real talent; they have, or ought to have, good things to communicate to the public, but, like the dog in the manger, they will not, nor permit others—we will mend or cure them of these matters by and by.



CHIMNEY PIECE IN THE HALL OF THE DEANERY AT WELLS.

FIRES.—Many have been the doubts and suspicions as to the origin of fires, and great excitement has occasionally prevailed when the cause of such calamities has remained in mystery. Very recently the total or partial demolition of a noble manorial pile in Montgomeryshire might have happened by fire, and the origin been involved in perfect mystery, had it not providentially happened that one of the establishment discovered smoke in time to prevent an extension of mischief. During the hot days of

the last month, the Countess of Powis's attendant, whilst in her bed-room at Powis Castle, about 10 o'clock in the morning, was somewhat alarmed at the smell of fire, and immediately instituted a search. Fire-places, cupboards, drawers, &c., were alike subjected to a scrutiny, when it was discovered that a toilet-cover on the dressing-table had just taken fire. The *femme de chambre*, conscious that no one had been or ought to have been there during the morning with fire, was somewhat puzzled. Having extinguished the ignited article, she resumed her occupation, but was again astonished

to smell fire. On approaching the table she found that the sun's rays, concentrated on a globular water bottle, which formed a lens, had burnt the tablecloth in two places through its several folds. Astonished, and incredibly, she called some of the servants, who were witnesses to a third ignition by the same means. Had it occurred an hour afterwards, the fire would not probably have been discovered until it had attained an ascendancy, and thus would a fire of an alarming nature have been created, the cause being wrapped in mystery and suspicion. —*Shropshire Journal*.